L A R C

Volume 46, Number 5

May 2006

President's Message

The club is off to a very good start again this year. I hope everyone will accept my challenge to make our club the best one in Louisiana.

If our hobby is to survive, we need to do our part to increase the ham population. If you know someone who is interested in our hobby, invite him or her to a club meeting. We now have 79 club members, with several more promising to send in their application. If you know someone who has not yet renewed their membership, encourage them to do so.

Our next big event will be the 2006 Field Day. Charles, KI5XP is Chairperson of the event. He is looking for a Co-chairperson and some committee members to assist him in this fun project. Although we are going for a **WIN** this year, we will have another club station setup for **FUN**. So place it on your calendar now, June 24-25th.

The Board of Directors thanks the membership for their vote of confidence on several items brought up at the last club meeting. The Children's Museum project is a new project and promises to generate much interest and media attention. Young kids can also spur renewed vitality in us older hams. I look forward to working with Nick K5QXJ, Chairperson and the Museum Director. She will visit us at the next club meeting, so lets be on our best behavior.

Until next time, 73 de Roland NA5Q

VE TESTING CHANGES

VE testing at the club meetings is going to change. Where in the past we have conducted the tests after the meeting, we are going to give a try to doing the testing before the meeting, starting at 6:00 P.M. This will give us an hour for the testing, and allow us to get home a little earlier.

Remember starting in May, if you want to test, the session will start at 6 PM. Also need some VE's to be present at that time.

Please bring your CSCSE's, copy of existing license, picture ID and $14.00 testing fee with you.

Thanks, *Danny K5ARH*

Next AARA Meeting
May 4, 2006
Red Cross Building
7:00 PM

"Hello"...
Celebrating 100 Years of
Voice over Radio Worldwide

What is Amateur Radio?

by Stratos Imvriotis KE5DCI

If you were to ask a dozen different amateurs what ham radio meant to them chances are you would get 12 different answers. Radio amateurs have discovered a richly rewarding high-tech hobby that has many different appeals to different people. Whether it is the ability to talk to local friends over the radio waves using a hand-held transceiver (HT), communicating digitally with packet radio to exchange personal messages or vital information in an emergency, talking to other hams anywhere in the world, or engaging in contests with other Radio Amateurs over the airwaves there is something for everyone.

Amateurs or Hams?

Amateurs are often affectionately called hams or ham radio operators and frequently the public is more familiar with this term than with the legal term Radio Amateur. The source of the name ham is not known but it has been around almost from the beginning of amateur radio in the early 1900s. The name amateur has nothing to do with skill or knowledge but rather implies that ham radio cannot be used for commercial or revenue generating purposes. It is truly a hobby but often one that makes a difference especially in emergency or disaster situations.

Modes of Communication

Amateur radio operators generally use radio transmitters and receivers to communicate with each other. As you will discover in these pages there are many forms of communication although voice (also known as phone) is still the most widely used. Some of the other forms of transmission are Radio Teletype (Rtty), Morse code (CW), amateur television (ATV), and digital modes such as Packet, Pactor and PSK-31. A recent survey shows that phone is the most widely used with CW standing second.

Getting Licensed

To become a radio amateur you will need to get a license. Licensing requirements are different in every country with different rules, privileges, and classes of license. Basically different levels of license give different privileges on the ham bands. The more challenging the license requirements the more privileges that are granted and the more interesting and enjoyable ham radio becomes.

What Hams Do?

Whether you would like to chat with your friends on the way to work or school, check into a net to discuss topics of a mutual interest, or volunteer for emergency services, amateur radio is first and foremost about communication. With hams that means two way communications by radio. Radios can be hand-held transceivers similar to a walkie talkie, a mobile unit for use in a car or other vehicle, or a base station with an outdoor antenna used for local or distance communication. Regardless of the type of equipment radio amateurs have a wide range of activities they can pursue. Some of these are:

- **Talking** with friends within the local community using a hand-held transceiver (HT) on VHF (2 meters) or UHF (70 cm.). You can extend your HT range up to 50 miles or more by transmitting through a local repeater.

TID BYTES

Congratulations to NA5Q

On April 3, 2006 Roland Guidry NA5Q received the ARRL 5 BandDXCC Mixed Mode Certificate and Plaque and the ARRL WAS Digital Certificate RTTY #429. All contacts were confirmed through LOTW.

Low Speed Net

Tom N5KWB (LTN Manager) initiated a new LA Slow Net (LSN) on Thursday, April 6, at 6:45 pm local time on 3680 kHz. This net will meet once a week on Thursdays.   If there's sufficient interest, the net will expand to two or more nights per week. It would be great for every ARES group to have at least one operator capable of handling both formal and tactical traffic on CW.

The first session turned out to be a great success according to Alan WA5LQZ with a surprising turnout of about a dozen participants.

This may be a good place for persons wanting to upgrade their license to practice their code copying. Tom stated that the speed will be regulated to whatever speed you feel comfortable in copying.

ARRL FIELD DAY 2006
WWW.ARRL.ORG

- **DXing.** DX means distance communication and with the right equipment worldwide communication on the HF bands (10 through 160 meters) is a regular possibility.

- **Assisting with emergency and disaster communication.** Organizations in the amateur community such as the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and the National Traffic System (NTS) prepare amateurs with the training needed to assist in emergency situations.

- **Technical experimenting.** Hams come from all walks of life ranging from technicians to engineers, teachers to scientists, and students to retirees. For many of them the attraction to the hobby is to build their own equipment whether it is just a simple antenna, something as complex as a transmitter, or an interface between their radio and a computer.

- **Contesting.** Contesting is often called the "sport" of ham radio. Almost every weekend there is some form of amateur radio contest. Hams get on the air and compete to see who can make the most contacts in a limited period of time.

- **Talk to an astronaut.** Yes, it is really possible. Space stations do have ham radio equipment and licensed ham astronauts take the time to make contacts with amateurs on earth. Hams also have satellites where you can bounce a signal to communicate with other hams on earth.

- **Use digital communication.** Connect a computer to your radio and install some software and you can be communicating digitally over the air. Some of these digital modes can be more effective in marginal transmission conditions and some even sport error free transmission.

- **Internet communication.** Using some of the latest technologies hams can supplement a modest station with Internet connections. Using features such as URL or IRLP or ECHOLINK on a local repeater a ham in Toronto can talk to one in Vancouver or even Australia using a simple hand-held transceiver.

To get involved with any of these activities requires an amateur radio license and maybe a little help from a neighborly ham or your local ham club.

CONTINUED ON THE JUNE LARC (*Call Signs and Amateur Radio Bands*)
STRATOS - KE5DCI

Editor's Comments

Our members would like to express our appreciation to Stratos KE5DCI for his presentation of his EchoLink station at the April meeting. Using a handi-talkie and J-Pole antenna, he was able to make a contact to a amateur radio repeater in Greece. We also thank Deano KD5JZN for his showing of a slide show of photos taken after Hurricane Rita.

Anyone wanting to do a presentation at our club meetings should contact our President or Vice President to set up a schedule.

Bill Vincent of the Lafayette OEP is asking for volunteers to head up SkyWarn, ARES© or RACES for Lafayette Parish. Please contact Bill or me if you are interested.

Herman KN5GRK
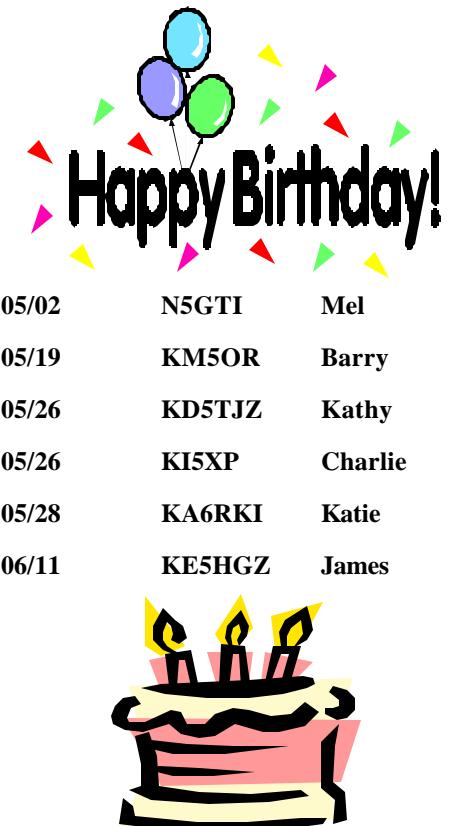
05/02	N5GTI	Mel
05/19	KM5OR	Barry
05/26	KD5TJZ	Kathy
05/26	KI5XP	Charlie
05/28	KA6RKI	Katie
06/11	KE5HGZ	James

Some members failed to put their birthdays on their applications for renewal / membership application, this is why some may not be listed.

May Hamfests

May 6 - Baton Rouge - 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. BRARC "Junk in the Shade" at:
Highland Park Observatory
13800 Highland Road
http://www.brarc.org
Talk-in: 146.790
Take I-10 to Highland Rd Exit, go approximately 2.8 miles to Observatory on left.

May 6 - Fifth Annual ARCOS Swapmeet & Cookout
ARC of Shreveport at:
Cypress Black Bayou Recreation Park on Linton Road.
Talk-in: 146.670 or 146.760 no PL

NEW NEWSLETTER

Since this is the first issue of our traffic net newsletter, I've decided to send it to all LA members signed up for section/division emails from ARRL HQ. Future issues will only be posted on the LA Section web site.

LOUISIANA SECTION NET NEWSLETTER

Vol. 1 No. 1   April 15, 2006

Louisiana Traffic Net (LTN) - 3910 kHz daily at 6 pm
Louisiana CW Net (LCW) - 3673 kHz daily at 6:30 pm and 10 pm
Louisiana Slow Net (LSN) - 3680 kHz Thursdays at 6:45 pm

INTRODUCTION
After a hiatus of nearly three years, I am back in the business of writing a newsletter for our section's traffic nets. Shortly after the LA CW Net (LCW) began operations in late 1996 after several years of no organized CW traffic net activities within the section, I returned to the traffic game and appointed myself the LCW Newsletter Editor in the inaugural issue dated June 1, 1997. (In the third issue I became the
LCW/LTN Net Newsletter Editor when the statistics for the LA Traffic Net were also included.) Hard copies of the old newsletter were mailed about five times per year until the last issue in the late spring of 2003. Instead of hard copies, it will be much easier if this new version is posted on our section's web site.
I'm planning to include detailed statistics in future issues as I develop the format of this electronic version. One purpose of the newsletter is to acknowledge the contributions of our traffic handlers, although few of us pursue this activity with the expectation of any honors being bestowed upon us. (If you truly are expecting recognition from outside the traffic handling community, then you are in for a big disappointment!) More importantly, however, I hope this newsletter will be an additional source of training, particularly for those of you relatively new to this operating activity.
I welcome suggestions from anyone regarding future topics for this newsletter. Perhaps some of you will volunteer to write an article on traffic handling. Although I've been a traffic handler off and on for quite awhile, I certainly don't have all the answers.
Many aspects of originating, sending, receiving, and delivering of formal messages are well established with essentially no "wiggle" room; on the other hand, there are variations used in practice that depend upon the particular situation at hand. A simple example is whether the sending operator should repeat any unusual words; if the receiving operator is an old "pro" and both ops are using QSK (break-in) on CW or VOX on SSB, then the sending op might decide to send each word only once. Thus, there's still quite a bit of judgment that a good traffic
handler must exercise each time he has a message to send.
At a time when traffic handling continues to decline in popularity nationwide, our section has taken several steps recently to acknowledge the important role of this operating activity. The LA Slow Net (LSN) is a new CW net aimed at the beginner or the old timer whose CW skills are rusty. This net is the brainchild of Tom N5KWB, who is also serving as the LTN Manager. Currently, LSN is a weekly net meeting Thursdays at 6:45 pm on 3680 kHz. If this new net proves to be popular, it will likely expand from a weekly net to two or more sessions per week. In addition, LCW now has a daily late session at 10 pm on 3673 kHz. For those of you who have trouble making the early session at 6:30 pm, perhaps this late session of LCW will be more convenient. LTN, our section's phone net, continues to meet daily at 6 pm on 3910 kHz. Besides handling traffic by our traditional CW and voice modes, several of us also send and receive traffic using one or more digital modes via the NTSD, the digital arm of the National Traffic System (NTS).

WHY FORMAL WRITTEN TRAFFIC IS IMPORTANT
I believe very strongly that everyone interested in emergency communications should know the basics of formal written traffic. Although most disasters are local in nature and the resulting emergency communications (emcomm) are often tactical in format, it is not true that tactical communications are always better for emergency work. In fact, written messages in a standard format (such as the ARRL radiogram format) should be used much more often than typically done during most emergencies. The resulting communications would be significantly more efficient than the haphazard informal traffic that we often hear during emergencies. The following passages are quoted directly from the ARRL's Public Service Communications Manual posted at http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/pscm/
While much amateur-to-amateur communicating in an emergency is of a procedural or tactical nature, the real meat of communicating is formal written traffic for the record. Formal written traffic is important for:

a. A record of what has happened--frequent status review, critique and evaluation. Completeness which minimizes omission of vital information.
b. Conciseness, which when used correctly actually takes less time than passing informal traffic.
c. Easier copy--receiving operators know the sequence of the information, resulting in fewer errors and repeats.

When relays are likely to be involved, standard ARRL message format should be used. The record should show, wherever possible:

1. A message number for reference purposes.
2. A precedence indicating the importance of the message.
3. A station of origin so any reply or handling inquiries can be referred to that station.
4. A check (count of the number of words in the message text) so receiving stations will know whether any words were missed.
5. A place of origin, so the recipient will know where the message came from (not necessarily the location of the station of origin).
6. Filing time, ordinarily optional but of great importance in an emergency message.
7. Date of origin.

The address should be complete and include a telephone number if known. The text should be short and to the point, and the signature should contain not only the name of the person sending the message but his title or connection also, if any.

Point-to-point services for direct delivery of emergency and priority traffic do not involve relays. Indeed, the full ARRL format is often not needed to record written traffic. Shortened forms should be used to save time and effort. For example, the call sign of the originating station usually identifies the place of origin. Also, the addressee is usually known and close by at the receiving station, so full address and telephone number are often superfluous. In many cases, message blanks can be designed so that only key words, letters or numbers have to be filled in and communicated. In some cases, the message form also serves as a log of the operation. Not a net goes by that you don't hear an ARL Fifty or an ARL Sixty One. Unfortunately, "greetings by Amateur Radio" does not apply well during disaster situations. You may hear an ARL text being used for health and welfare traffic, but rarely during or after the actual disaster. Currently, no ARL text describes the wind speed and barometric pressure of a hurricane, medical terminology in a mass casualty incident or potassium iodide in a nuclear power plant drill. While no one is suggesting that an ARL text be developed for each and every situation, there is no reason why amateurs can't work with the local emergency management organizations and assist them with more efficient communications.

Amateurs are often trained and skilled communicators. The emergency management community recognizes these two key words when talking about the Amateur Radio Service. Amateurs must use their skills to help the agencies provide the information that needs to be passed, while at the same time showing their talents as trained communicators who know how to pass information quickly and efficiently. We are expected to pass the information accurately, even if we do not understand the terminology.

Traffic handlers and ARES members are resourceful individuals. Some have developed other forms or charts for passing information. Some hams involved with the SKYWARN program, for instance, go down a list and fill in the blanks, while others use grid squares to define a region. Regardless of the agency that we are working with, we must use our traffic-handling skills to the utmost advantage. Sure, ARL messages are beneficial when we are passing health and welfare traffic. But are they ready to be implemented in times of need in your community? The traffic handler, working through the local ARES organizations, must develop a working relationship with those organizations who handle health and welfare inquiries. Prior planning and personal contact are the keys to allowing an existing National Traffic System to be put to its best use. If we don't interface with the agencies we serve, the resources of the Amateur Radio Service will go untapped.

Regardless of the format used, the appropriate procedures cannot be picked up solely by reading or studying. There is no substitute for actual practice. Your emergency net should practice regularly--much more often than it operates in a real or simulated emergency. Avoid complacency, the feeling that you will know how to operate when the time comes. You won't, unless you do it frequently, with other operators whose style of operating you get to know.

The last paragraph above is particularly pertinent. The ability to handle formal messages is (or should be!) an important part of everyone's emergency communications training, but no one can become an efficient traffic handler merely by reading about it; you must do it and do it often enough so that it becomes practically second nature if you want to be truly effective during emergencies. You don't have to check into a traffic net every day, but you should receive and send formal messages on a fairly regular basis so that you aren't at a complete loss on how to do it during an emergency.

THE NATIONAL TRAFFIC SYSTEM

Once again I will quote directly from the League's Public Service Communications Manual:

The National Traffic System plan is a means for systematizing amateur traffic handling facilities by making a structure available for an integrated traffic facility designed to achieve the utmost in two principal objectives: rapid movement of traffic from origin to destination, and training amateur operators to handle written traffic and participate in directed nets. These two objectives, which sometimes conflict with each other, are the underlying foundations of the National Traffic System.

Unfortunately, the training opportunities afforded by the National Traffic System are underused and under appreciated by many ARES groups, both here in LA and nationwide. LTN and LCW meet daily and anyone is most welcome to participate as seldom or as often as he desires. Ideally, each ARES group would sponsor a weekly (or, perhaps, even a daily) local net, typically on VHF, for training in formal traffic handling as well as tactical communications. These local nets would have a representative check in on either LTN or LCW (or both) to send any formal traffic addressed outside their local area and to receive any traffic going into their local area. In addition, if all of us would send an occasional greeting message to friends and relatives scattered around the country, the quality of training on our NTS nets would improve.

Some people apparently believe that an NTS operator receiving a message carrying the EMERGENCY precedence would simply hold it (perhaps for an hour or more, if not longer) until relaying it toward its destination on the next net within the normal NTS cycle! I hope that everyone reading this newsletter understands that an emergency message gets the immediate attention of any traffic handler. Depending upon the specific message precedence and other circumstances, the normal sequence of relaying routine traffic used on our daily NTS nets is often "short circuited" by experienced traffic handlers when handling non-routine traffic. In addition, under extreme cases the normal (once a day) NTS cycles can operate continuously if enough trained operators are available. A complete NTS cycle from the section level up through the area level and back down again requires approximately three hours to complete, not an inordinate amount of time to move routine, welfare, and priority traffic from one end of the country to the other if no other means is available.

SUMMARY

That's about it for this issue. Starting on May 1 all net control stations should send their reports to W4DLZ. LTN net controls should continue to send their reports to N5KWB. If you are interested in serving as an NCS (perhaps as a backup to the regular net control) on LTN or LCW, please let N5KWB or W4DLZ know. Hopefully we will have another issue of this newsletter within the next few months.

73,

Mickey K5MC
LA Section Manager

Editor's Note: Permission granted by Mickey Cox K5MC to use part or all of this newsletter in the LARC. To continue to receive the "Louisiana Section Manager Newsletter", you will need to sign up through the AARL Website (ARRL Members Only).

Herman Campbell - *Editor*
416 Dale St.
Lafayette, LA 70501-2012

http://www.w5ddl.org

I-10

exit 100

3/10 mile

Willow St

Amb Caffrey

Red Cross

Pat St

Amadee St
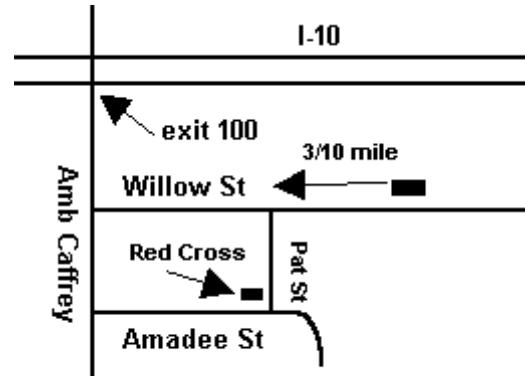
June 9 - 10, 2006
Plano, TX
http://www.hamcom.org

COMPLEMENTARY
ISSUE

From Carolyns' Kitchen Corner (KA5IJU)

SKILLET MACARONI AND CHEESE-SOUTHWESTERN
Makes 6 cups

1 cup elbo macaroni	1 pound ground turkey
1/2 chopped onion	1/2 cup chopped bell pepper
1 teaspoon cumin	1/2 teaspoon salt
1 can diced tomatoes with chilies	1 (8oz) can tomato sauce
1/2 cup water	1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

 Bring a pot of water to boil. Cook the macaroni according to package directions; drain and keep warm.

 Spray a large nonstick skillet with nonstick spray. Add the turkey and cook until no longer pink, stirring with a wooden spoon to break up the meat. Stir in the onion, bell pepper, chili powder, cumin and salt. Cook, stirring occasionally until the onion is tender about 3 minutes. Add the tomatoes, sauce and water; simmer, uncovered 10 minutes. Add the macaroni and cheese, stirring to combine.

Next Month: Banana Cream Pie

FCC LICENSE INFO
SERVICE

 The FCC toll-free (WATS) number for Amateur Radio license inquiries - including inquiries about vanity and new call signs. The number, 888-225-5322, will connect callers to the FCC National Call Center, handled by the FCC's Consumer Information Bureau. Amateurs having ULS problems or questions should contact the FCC's ULS Technical Support staff at 202-414-1250 or ulscomm@fcc.gov. Web site:
 http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/
 New callsign information can also be obtained from the ARRL/VEC at 860-594-3000.
 http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec
 The mailing address to the FCC is: Federal Communications Commission,   1270 Fairfield Road, Gettysberg PA 17325-7245